

Date : 18th Dec 2023

Weekly Current Affairs

English

National

1. 21st Meeting of Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers (SCILR)

The 37th Annual General Meeting of NWDA and 21st meeting of Special Committee for Interlinking of Rivers (SCILR) was chaired by Union Minister Shri Gajendra Singh at Dr Ambedkar International Centre in New Delhi. 8th India Water week 2024 was also launched by the Minister.

2. DPIIT releases report on Logistics Costs in India

The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry launched a report "Logistics Cost in India: Assessment and Long Term Framework" in line with India's National Logistics Policy. The major aim of the policy is to reduce Logistics cost in India.

3. ASEAN-India Millet Festival

The ASEAN-India Millet Festival was inaugurated by Union Minister of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare and Tribal Affairs, Shri Arjun Munda at New Delhi. The aim of the festival is to raise awareness and establish a large market for millet and millet based products. 2023 has been recognized as the International year of Millets.



4. World Record for Largest Reading activity

Pune has entered into Guinness Book of World Records for conducting World's Largest Reading

Activity. The event involved 3066 parents gathered to read aloud to their children. It surpassed China's Record of 2884 participants.

5. India's Fastest Solar Electric Boat Barracuda

India's Fastest Solar Electric Boat "Barracuda" was launched at the Navgathi Panavalley Yard in Alappuzha, Kerala. It is built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders and Navalt. It is an Eco-friendly vessel to promote eco friendly Marine transportation.

6. 3000 crore investment in Gujarat

A MoU was signed between Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages and Government of Gujarat for investment of 3000 crore in Gujarat by Hindustan Coca Cola Beverages. A new facility will be set up at Rajkot using the investment for producing Juice and Aerated drinks.

7. Tripartite agreement for development of Sewage Treatment Plant

A tripartite agreement was signed between National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG), UP Jal Nigam and EEL Mathura Infra Engineers pvt Ltd for development of Sewage Treatment Plant at Gokul Barrage in Mathura. The agreement is executed under Hybrid Annuity PPP mode.

8. Uttarakhand Climate Resilient Power System development project

The Government of India and Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed an agreement for development of the Uttarakhand Climate Resilient Power System project. Under the agreement, the Asian Development Bank is to provide a loan of \$200 million to the Government of India.

9. Year in Search 2023 by Google

Chandrayaan 3 along with Karnataka Election results that have dominated the search trends in India in 2023 as per the Year in Search 2023 edition of Google.

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The Indian Premier League was the most popular sporting event in the Subcontinent.

10. National Conference on Responsible Business Conduct 2023

"National Conference on Responsible Business Conduct 2023: Embracing ESG in India " is being organised by the School of Business Environment at IICA, New Delhi. The Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) is an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs established in 2012.

11. IEPFA and NCAER jointly organise Workshop

A workshop on "Investor Education and Protection Policy in India: Claiming the Unclaimed" was jointly organised by the Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA) and the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER). It was organised for youth, engaging college students.

12. Multimedia Logistics Park (MMLP)

NHAI and M/s DC Multi Modal Park (Nagpur) Limited have entered into a partnership for development of Multi Modal Logistics Park (MMLP) in Nagpur. The estimated cost of the project is 673 crore and it aligns with PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan.

13. SC declared Article 370 a temporary provision

The Supreme Court of India in its Unanimous decision has declared Article 370 a temporary provision of the Indian Constitution. Article 370 gave special status to Jammu and Kashmir. The court in its argument stated that Jammu and Kashmir lost its internal sovereignty upon its accession with India.

14. IRSE International Convention 2023

Union Minister Darshana Jardosh inaugurated the IRSE International Convention 2023 at Manekshaw Centre, Delhi. It is a 3 day convention focusing on Digital Transformation of Railways, Train on Track etc. The Convention is jointly organised by IRSE Bharat Section

and IRSTE.

15. 58 Airports under Krishi Udan Scheme

Launched in 2020, The Krishi Udan Scheme has covered 58 airports across the country. It was launched on National and international routes to assist farmers transport Agricultural products. The number of airports covered under the North Eastern, hilly and Tribal region are 25.

16. Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI (YUVAi)

A Collaborative initiative of Government of India and Intel India "Youth for Unnati and Vikas with AI (YUVAi)" was launched at Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) Summit. The initiative is aimed at equipping the youth with essential AI skills.



17. NAeG 2024 web portal

The National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2024 web portal was launched by the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). NAeG is one of the most prestigious digital Governance Awards in the country.

18. 16 nations to participate in VGGS 2024

16 countries along with 14 organisations have confirmed for partnership in the 10th Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024. The event is to be held in January 2024 under the theme "Gateway to the Future". The collaborations aim to bolster bilateral relations.

19. 27th WAIPA World Investment Conference to be held in India

Invest India under DPIIT is set to host the 27th World Investment Conference (WIC) at India International Convention and Expo Centre- Yashobhoomi, New Delhi. It is said to be the largest World Investment Conference to be held ever. Invest India is the current president of the World Association of Investment Promotion Agencies (WAIPA).

20. Music Festival Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam at Vijayawada

Krishnaveni Sangeetha Neerajanam Music Festival is being organised at Vijayawada on the banks of River Krishna. The event is being organised by the Ministry of Tourism in collaboration with the Ministry of Culture, Sangeet Natak Akademi and State Government of Andhra Pradesh.



21. One Bharat Sari Walkathon

India's financial capital, Mumbai hosted the country's largest ever "One Bharat Sari Walkathon" organised by the Ministry of Textiles. The event showcased different ways of wearing saree by women from all across the country. It is aimed at promoting the spirit of traditional textile and promoting handloom Sari culture in India.

22. International Workshop on ISAA

A two day International Workshop is being conducted by National Institute for the Empowerment of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (NIEPID) on Indian Scale for Assessment of Autism (ISAA). It is being conducted at DAIC, New Delhi. It is aimed at training the ISAA tool

developed by NIEPID for assessment of autism in the country.

23. 4E Wave Launched

A student-led National Movement for Energy Conservation "4E Wave" was launched by Union Minister for Power and New & Renewable Energy Shri RK Singh. The movement aims to promote sustainable practices in the field of Energy conservation. It was launched in the presence of Lieutenant Governor of J&K Shri Manoj Sinha.

24. India-Korea Electronic Origin Data Exchange System (EODES)

The Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) launched India-Korea Electronic Origin Data Exchange System (EODES) for faster clearance of imported goods. It is being launched by Chairman CBIC, Mr Sanjay Kumar in presence of Mr. KO Kwang Hyo, Commissioner of Korea Customs Service.

International

1. Oldest Record of Humans domesticating Yaks found

The Oldest Record of Domestication of Yaks by Humans was found in the ancient settlement of Bangga in Shannan Prefecture of Tibetan Autonomous Region. Bangladesh is the earliest agro pastoral settlement located at an elevation of 3750 metres above sea level.

2. 2023 International Debt Report

The World Bank released the International Debt Report 2023. The report Highlighted that developing countries spent USD 443.5 billion to service their external public and publicly guaranteed Debt in 2022. The scarce resources were shifted away from critical needs such as health, education, and the environment due to increase in costs.

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3. IMF release 2nd Tranche of Economic relief for Sri Lanka

The International Monetary Fund has released the second tranche of an economic relief package comprising USD 337 Million for Sri Lanka. China is the biggest official lender of Sri Lanka holding 52% of Islands bilateral debt.

4. Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023

A new report titled "Africa Regional Overview of Food Security and Nutrition 2023" was released by combined efforts of various UN agencies. The report stated that 20% of the African Population experienced undernourishment in 2022. The report was jointly released by FAO, AUC, ECA and WFP.



5. Biocrust making Great Wall of China stronger

Researchers from China conducted a study stating that a living breathing shield of Biocrust is making the Great wall of China stronger. It was built in 220 BC in Huairou district of China by Qin Shi Huang. Biocrust is a community of Cyanobacteria, Lichen and Moss clinging to Wall's surface.

6. Giant Pliosaur Skull discovered

A giant Pliosaur Skull has been discovered in South

West England's Dorset Jurassic Coast. It is a 2 metre long fossil with a limb size of 12 metre. It is also described as Underwater T.Rex and inhabited oceans 150 million years ago.

7. Sakura Science High School Programme 2023

64 students from India will participate in the Sakura Science High School Programme 2023 in Japan. The students were invited by the Japan Science and Technology Agency (JST). India participated in the program for the first time in 2016.

8. World's deepest Underground Physics Laboratory unveiled by China

The Deep Underground and Ultra-low Radiation Background Facility for Frontier Physics Experiments (DURF), also the World's Deepest and Largest Underground Physics Laboratory was unveiled by China. The laboratory is located beneath Jinping Mountain in Sichuan Province.

9. Indian River Cities Alliance (RCA) goes global

A Memorandum of Common Purpose (MoCP) was signed between the National Mission for Clean Ganga (NMCG) and the Mississippi River Cities and Towns Initiative (MRCTI) for capacity building in integrated River management. The MoCP was signed at the ongoing COP 28 in Dubai. The Global River Cities alliance (GRCA) was also launched during the event.

Sports

1. Leander Paes and Vijay Amritraj Inducted into International Tennis Hall of Fame

The Two time Olympic medallist Leander Paes and Two time Davis Cup finalist Vijay Amritraj were inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame. The induction ceremony will take place in Newport, Rhode Island.

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2. Mohammad Shami nominated for Arjuna Award

Indian Star Bowler who finished as the top wicket taker in the ODI World Cup 2023 has been nominated for the Arjuna Award. Indian Badminton men's Double pair of Satwik Sairaj-Chirag are nominated for India's highest sports prize the Major Dhyan Chand Award.

3. IGA Swiatek won WTA Player of the Year 2023

IGA Swiatek becomes first woman since Serena Williams to claim WTA player of the year twice in a row. She ended the season ranking 1. Serena Williams was WTA player of the Year from 2012-15.



4. Sicoma Perugia defends FIVB Men's Volleyball Club World Championship title

Sicoma Perugia defeated Itambe Minas at the finals of FIVB Men's Volleyball Club World Championship. They retained the title for the second time. The final was held at Koramangala Indoor Stadium, Bengaluru.

5. ICC to start Stop Clock Trial

The International Cricket Council (ICC) to start the Stop Clock Trial from the first West Indies Vs England T20I. The Stop Clock Trial will restrict the amount of time taken by bowlers between overs.

6. Defending Champions Gurgaon Sapphires retain Pro Tennis League trophy

Defending Champions Gurgaon Sapphires beat Ichiban Samurai 81-56 in the finals of Pro Tennis League. The Finals was held at RK Khanna Stadium.

7. Russian and Belarusian Athletes to participate as Neutral at Paris Olympics

The International Olympic Committee allows Russian and Belarusian athletes to participate in the Paris Olympics 2024 as Neutrals. The athletes will not be allowed to raise flags, emblems or anthems at the event.

Person In news

1. Mohan Yadav sworns in as Madhya Pradesh CM

In a major turn of events in Madhya Pradesh Politics BJP named Mohan Yadav as the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh replacing Shivraj Singh Chouhan of BJP. BJP won 163 seats in Madhya Pradesh State Assembly Elections.

2. Iranian Activist Narges Mohammadi gets Nobel Peace Prize

The children of the Iranian Activist Narges Mohammadi accepted the Nobel Peace prize 2023 on behalf of their mother. The activist couldn't accept her prize as she was jailed in Iran. She worked for a long time advocating for women's rights and democracy in Iran.



Science and tech/Space/Defence

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1. INS Kadmat

The Indian Naval Ship (INS) KADMAT arrived at Manila, Philippines as part of the ongoing Long Range Op Deployment. INS KADMAT is an indigenously designed Anti Submarine Warfare Corvette. It is equipped with an anti-submarine weapon suite

2. Mission Antarctica

Mission Antarctica carried out by a team of Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Darjeeling was flagged in by Rashtra Raja Mantri Shri Ajay Bhatt. The team entered the Asia Book of Records for carrying out Mission Antarctica. Under the Mission a 7500 Sq ft and 75 kg National flag was hoisted atop Mt Rhenock in Sikkim Himalayas.

3. INS TARMUGLI

The Indian Navy inducted INS Tarmugli at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam. It is a fast attack Craft that served under the flag of two nations with three names. The ship was repaired and upgraded at Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam by the Indian Navy.

4. 4th edition of Exercise VINBAX-2023

The 4th edition of Joint Military Exercise VINBAX-2023 is taking place in Hanoi, Vietnam between India and Vietnam. It was inaugurated in 2018 and aims to strengthen collaborative partnerships and promote interoperability between Indian and Vietnam.

5. Swimmer Delivery Vehicles for special undersea operations

Indian Navy to acquire indigenously made underwater chariots/midget submarines or Swimmer delivery vehicles. It will enhance the capabilities of its Marine Commandos (MARCOS) for special undersea operations.



6. HONOUR RUN

The Indian Army conducted "Honour Run- Indian Army Veteran's Half Marathon" in Delhi. It is being conducted in commemoration of the historic military victory in the Indo-Pak war of 1999 also known as Kargil War. The theme of the event was "Honour Run".

7. Ocean Sailing Expedition from Goa to Kochi

To mark 75 years of celebrations of National Defence Academy (NDA), the first leg of an Ocean Sailing expedition from Goa to Kochi and back, culminated in Kochi. The NDA completes 75 years of its establishment on January 16, 2024.

8. Italy won Admiral's Cup 2023

Team Italy represented by Midshipman Avallone Antonio won the 12th edition of "Admiral's Cup' Sailing Regatta 2023 held at Indian Naval Academy (INA), Ezhimala. Team India won the second and third position, shared by Team UK and Team Germany.

Miscellaneous

1. National Energy Conservation Day 2023

The National Energy Conservation Day is celebrated annually on December 14. The day aims to showcase the importance of Conserving energy and the achievements of Nation in energy efficiency and conservation. The President of India Shri Droupadi Murmu is the chief guest at the National Energy

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Conservation Day 2023 function being held in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.



2. Quad Climate Working Group (QCWG)

A Side event on "Localised Climate Action" was organised by MoEFCC at the Indian Pavilion of UNFCCC COP28 at Dubai. It was organised under the Climate Ambition Pillar of Quad Climate Working Group (QCWG). The event was based on G20s High Level Principle 7 on Lifestyles for Sustainable Development.

Health/Agriculture/Environment

1. Freshwater Fish Species risk extinction due to Climate Change

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List Assessment states that a quarter of world's freshwater fish species are at risk of extinction due to climate change. 3086 species out of 14,898 species identified by IUCN are at risk of Extinction.

2. AKTOCYTE tablets

Scientists from Department of Atomic Energy and IDSR labs, Bengaluru are collaborating to develop AKTOCYTE tablets. These tablets will enhance the quality of life for cancer patients undergoing Radiotherapy. The patients that were treated with AKTOCYTE tablets demonstrated extraordinary recovery.

3. Himalayas get cooler despite Global Climate Crisis

A Study was published in Journal Nature Geoscience which stated that a surprising phenomenon has emerged in the Himalayas that might slow down the

effects of the Global Climate crisis. The Katabatic winds are triggered when high temperatures hit high altitude ice masses, that blow cold air to lower altitude areas.

4. New Marine Amphipod discovered in Chilika Lake

The New Species of Marine Amphipod was discovered in Chilika Lake by researchers at Berhampur University, Odisha. The species have been named as DemaOrchestia Alanensis after Global expert Alan Myers.

5. Blue Drop Report 2023

The South African Department of Water and Sanitation released a Report titled "Blue Drop National Report 2023". The report stated that almost half of the drinking water was deemed microbiologically unsafe for consumption. The decline in drinking water quality has been experienced in South Africa since 2014.

6. Emissions Divide Report 2023

The Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW) released a report titled The Emissions Divide Report 2023. The report highlights the differences in Carbon emissions between Developing and Developed nations.

7. Oldest Disease Causing Fungus *Potteromyces Asteroxylicola*

The scientists at Natural History Museum of London have discovered the oldest disease causing bacteria called *Potteromyces Asteroxylicola*. The fungus dates back to 407 million years ago and is found on Fossil samples from Rhynie Chert in Scotland.

8. Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme

The Indian Forest and Wood Certification Scheme was launched by the Environment Ministry. The Scheme aims at providing third party Certification to promote sustainable forest management and agroforestry. Indian Institute of Forest Management, Bhopal has

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been chosen as the Scheme operating agency .

9. Royal Bengal Tiger spotted at 3640m

The Royal Bengal Tiger was captured by trap cameras of Bombay National History Society (BNHS) for the first time at an altitude of 3640m. It was spotted inside the premises of Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary located at a tri junction of Sikkim, Bengal and Bhutan.



10. DRDO to pause missile testing to save Sea Turtles

The Defence Research Development Organization (DRDO) to pause missile testing at Wheeler Island off Odisha Coast due to mass nesting season of Olive Ridley Sea Turtles. Wheeler Island is also known as APJ Abdul Kalam Island.

11. Kala Azar Elimination Target 2023

India set to achieve the Elimination target of Kala Azar in 2023. Kala Azar also known as Visceral Leishmaniasis is a fatal disease transmitted by the bite of Phlebotomine Sandflies. Bangladesh was recognized as the first country in the World to be officially validated by WHO for eliminating Kala Azar.

12. UNEPs "State of Finance for Nature" report

The United Nations Environment Programme released the "State of Finance for Nature " report on the sidelines of COP28 of UNFCCC. The report states that countries invest USD 7 Trillion annually in subsidies and private investments which has a direct negative impact on Nature.

13. Cheetah Breeding centre in Banni Grasslands

The Government of India has approved the setting up of Cheetah Breeding and Conservation Centre in Banni Grassland. The state Government of Gujarat prepared a proposal under National CAMPA for using Banni Grassland as the centre.

14. Global Cooling Pledge

63 countries made history by signing the World's First Global Cooling Pledge at COP28, Dubai. The Pledge was to reduce cooling emissions by 68 percent by 2050. The cooling emissions are expected to triple by 2050, currently accounting for 7 percent of Global greenhouse gases.

15. India ranks seventh in CCPI 2024

The annual climate report "Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2024" was released on the sidelines of COP 28, Dubai. India improved its ranking from eight last year to seventh in 2023. The report does not rank the first three countries as they are kept within the "Very High" performance category.

16. eDNA from Snow Tracks

Scientists at WWF and MIX Research have developed a unique noninvasive method of collecting environmental DNA (eDNA) from snow tracks of Polar Bears, Eurasian Lynx and Snow leopards. The new tool will protect these enigmatic species and their remote habitats.

17. India selected as lead country for IMO Green Voyage2050 project

India has been selected as the leading country for the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Green Voyage2050 Project. The objective of the project is to assist developing countries in their efforts to reduce GreenHouse Gas (GHG) Emissions from ships.

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GREEN VOYAGE
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18. Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme 2023

The Environment Ministry in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism launched Amrit Dharohar Capacity Building Scheme 2023 in Sultanpur National Park, Haryana. It is an Alternative Livelihood Programme for capacity building of local community members around different Ramsar Sites of the country.

